

In The Claims

Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A method of assigning a pending call to one of a plurality of agents at least some of which are human agents, such method comprising the steps of:

providing a description of the pending call to at least some of the human agents who are available to handle calls prior to assignment of the pending call to an agent and allowing the available human agents to bid on handling the pending call, the description including call associated information, and non-call associated contextual information of the pending call;

receiving bids to handle the pending call from the at least some of the available human agents; and

assigning the pending call to a human agent of the plurality of agents with a highest relative received bid.

2. (Previously Presented) The method of assigning the call as in claim 1 wherein the description of the call comprises a call target identifier and a client identifier.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of assigning the call as in claim 2 further comprising ~~rejecting any~~ submitting a lowest possible bid from an agent of the plurality of agents ~~who does not meet a minimum skill level for the call~~ in response to the agent double-clicking on an Enter Bid button or window.

4. (Previously Presented) The method of assigning the call as in claim 1 wherein the step of providing the description further comprises displaying the provided information on a terminal display of each available agent of the plurality of agents in a separate call selection window for each call.

5. (Previously Presented) The method of assigning the call as in claim 1 further comprising defining the bid as being a numerical value between two non-zero limits.

6. (Previously Presented) The method of assigning the call as in claim 1 wherein the received bids are one of a general and a specific bid.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of assigning the call as in claim 1 further comprising classifying the call as to media type.
8. (Previously Presented) The method of assigning the call as in claim 7 further comprising determining an agent average number of calls handled per time period of a call type of the classified call for each agent of the plurality of agents.
9. (Original) The method of assigning the call as in claim 8 further comprising calculating a group average of calls handled per time period of the call type of the classified call.
10. (Previously Presented) The method of assigning the call as in claim 9 further comprising rejecting any bid from an agent of the plurality of agents where the agent's determined agent average exceeds a threshold value above the calculated group average.
11. (Original) The method of assigning the call as in claim 1 further comprising assigning the call to a default agent of the plurality of agents when an acceptable bid is not received within a predetermined time period.
12. (Currently Amended) A apparatus for assigning a pending call to one of a plurality of agents at least some of which are human agents, such apparatus comprising:
means for displaying a description of the call to at least one of the human agents of the plurality of agents who is available for conversing with callers prior to assignment of the call to an agent, thereby offering the call to the at least one available human agent for bidding, the description including context information providing textual content of the call or a descriptor indicating a context from which the call originated;
means for displaying a bid to handle the call from at least one of the human agents; and
means for assigning the call to an agent of the at least one of the available human agent with a highest relative received bid.
13. (Currently Amended) The apparatus for assigning the call as in claim 12 wherein the ~~description of the call means for displaying further comprises non-call-associated contextual~~

information which provides an indication of context of the call means for submitting a lowest possible bid in response to one of the human agents double-clicking on a Enter Bid button or window.

14. (Previously Presented) The apparatus for assigning the call as in claim 13 further comprising means for rejecting any bid from an agent of the plurality of agents who does not meet a minimum skill level for the call.

15. (Original) The apparatus for assigning the call as in claim 12 wherein the means for providing the description further comprises means for displaying the provided information on a terminal display of each agent of the plurality of agents.

16. (Original) The apparatus for assigning the call as in claim 12 further comprising means for defining the bid as being a numerical value between two limits.

17. (Original) The apparatus for assigning the call as in claim 16 wherein the means for defining the bid as being a numerical value between two limits further comprises means for defining the two limits as being a numerical value between one and ten.

18. (Original) The apparatus for assigning the call as in claim 12 further comprising means for classifying the call.

19. (Previously Presented) The apparatus for assigning the call as in claim 18 further comprising means for determining an agent average number of calls handled per time period of a call type of the classified call for each agent of the plurality of agents.

20. (Original) The apparatus for assigning the call as in claim 19 further comprising means for calculating a group average of calls handled per time period of the call type of the classified call.

21. (Previously Presented) The apparatus for assigning the call as in claim 20 further comprising means for rejecting any bid from an agent of the plurality of agents where the agent's determined agent average exceeds a threshold value above the calculated group average.

22. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for assigning a call to one of a plurality of human agents, such apparatus comprising:

- a call display processor adapted to provide a description of the call including context of the call to each of the plurality of human agents prior to assignment of the call to an agent of the plurality of human agents;

- a call selection window adapted to display the provided description of the call and to allow available agents of the plurality of agents to bid on the call; and

- a call assignment processor adapted to assign the call to an agent of the plurality of human agents with a highest relative received bid.

23. (Previously Presented) The apparatus for assigning the call as in claim 22 wherein the description includes both call associated information and a contextual indication of the call.

24. (Previously Presented) The apparatus for assigning the call as in claim 23 further comprising an averaging agent processor adapted to calculate an agent group average of calls handled by the group for each call type, and wherein the assignment processor rejects any bids from an agent for the remainder of the a period if calls of a particular type served by the agent during the period exceeds a threshold amount above the calculated group average for the particular type.

25. (Previously Presented) The apparatus for assigning the call as in claim 22 wherein bids on the calls further comprise a numerical value between two non-zero limits.

26. (Currently Amended) A method of assigning a call to one of a plurality of agents, such method comprising the steps of:

- providing a description of the call including context information regarding a context of the call;

- displaying the provided description to the plurality of agents prior to assignment of the

call to an agent of the plurality of agents;

receiving a bid to handle the call from each of the plurality of agents available to converse with callers; and

assigning the call to an agent of the plurality of agents with a highest relative value of the received bids.

27. (Previously Presented) A method of assigning a call to one of a plurality of human agents, such method comprising the steps of:

providing a description of the call including call associated information and information indicating a context of the call;

displaying the provided description to a portion of the plurality of human agents available to converse with a caller, prior to assignment of the call to an agent of the plurality of human agents;

receiving a bid to handle the call from each of the portion of the plurality of human agents;

comparing a value of each of the received bids; and

assigning the call to an agent of the plurality of human agents with a highest relative value of the compared bids.